

Lived Experience Leadership in Agencies & Systems

This tool should stimulate reflection of how organizations can meaningfully include Lived Experience Leaders in their work.

Definition: A Lived Experience Leader is someone who has personal experience in using resources or services to strengthen his or her family and speaks and acts from their perspective as a family member.

(Parents Anonymous Inc.)

Answer the following questions from your perspective as a Lived Experience Leader.

1. In what ways do you meaningfully engage with agencies and systems as a Leader?

2. What resources do you need to progress your leadership in agencies and systems?

3. What resources do agencies and systems need to support meaningful leadership of individuals with lived experience?

4. List your skills and experience that will benefit agencies and systems.

5. The list on the next page offers suggestions for how agencies and systems can meaningfully engage Leaders. How will you engage in Lived Experience Leadership moving forward?

Direct Service

1. Attend classes on parenting skills or child development.
2. Attend a training to feel confident about your child's development.
3. Follow through on referrals to specialists.
4. Learn how to effectively coordinate your child's services.
5. Have a list of local support groups in the area.
6. Keep a list of your child's providers- including case worker, physician, therapist, etc.

Agency Opportunities

1. Find a friend and go to a community meeting or training.
2. Work with a community partner to donate their space for a meeting.
3. Write an article about a family success story and ask agencies to include it in their newsletter.
4. Partner with an agency to develop a feedback process for families.
5. Develop a list of local support groups and share it in the community- library, grocery store, waiting rooms, etc.
6. Create a forum to hear from other families regarding their wellness needs- some of which may include other "systems"- foster care, autism meetings, grief support, etc.

Systems Change

1. Attend professional development trainings to support your skills as a Family Leader.
2. Work with an agency to review aggregate data of feedback from families and recommend policy changes as a result of the feedback.
3. Participate in grant writing to assure the perspective of families is integrated into program development.
4. Participate as a content expert on a Quality Improvement Team.
5. Establish yourself as a consultant and professionally offer consultative reports including policy recommendations.
6. Be informed about legislative issues that will impact children and families.
7. Prepare and deliver an impactful legislative testimony.
8. Develop and lead an advisory council at an agency.
9. Participate in leadership development classes to enhance your skills and content knowledge.

